

I GOT GARBAGE

2016 Nominet Trust 100 Winner

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2016

NEW BUSINESS MODEL TO EMPOWER BANGALORE'S WASTEPICKERS

By Mindtree

Project URL: <http://igotgarbage.com/>

Project Twitter: [@igotgarbage](https://twitter.com/igotgarbage)

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33-year-old Mansoor grew up in a family of ragpickers, helping his parents sort through landfill waste. Numbering 25,000 in Bangalore, ragpickers endure inhumane conditions and have a life expectancy of just 39 years. Low returns force children as young as five to work, preventing them from receiving an education.

Yet contrary to their ragged appearance, ragpickers provide a valuable recycling service. Bangalore's 8.5 million residents generate more than 4,000 tonnes of solid waste every day, 90% of which ends up in landfills. Ragpickers manually sort through the waste, diverting 20% to recycling centres.

I Got Garbage is a new business model launched by IT company Mindtree to empower ragpickers to better monetise their skills, while making it easier for Bangalore's population to recycle their waste.

Mindtree transforms ragpickers into recycling managers, providing them with training, a uniform and a tablet so they can be hired by families and businesses in Bangalore to collect and recycle their waste.

Since signing up with I Got Garbage, Mansoor has become an entrepreneur, employing 10 former ragpickers to sort through as much as 12 tonnes of dry waste every month, compared to the 500kg his whole family managed when he

was young. Crucially, 75% of his customers are now also segregating their waste at source.

5,200 ragpickers have signed with I Got Garbage in the first year. Typically, their wages have doubled, and they enjoy much healthier work conditions. Prashat Mehra, Chief Architect of Social Inclusion at Mindtree says that if a married couple sign up, their increase in income could be enough to send their children to school.

For now, Mindtree is working to perfect their model, and is hoping to bring bigger recycling facilities into Bangalore to meet demand. Follow their progress at <http://igotgarbage.com>

Image courtesy of --Tico--

Last updated: 21st of July, 2016